



**Utah CERT Conference  
February 22, 2008  
Red Lion Hotel – Salt Lake City, Utah**



**Welcome**

Kathy Smith, Executive Director of the Utah Commission on Volunteers welcomed all to the 2008 CERT Conference.

**Rachel Jacky, National CERT Program Director**

CERT is a training program that prepares citizens to safely assist their families, neighbors, co-workers, or anyone who needs help in the event of a widespread emergency when professional responders may not be able to reach everyone as quickly as help is needed.

**National CERT Program Update:**

**The Program today**

- 3,000 local CERT programs.
- 30% growth over past 12 months.
- Every state and territory represented
- 68 registered local CERT programs in Utah
- Typically sponsored by local fire department.
- Typically supported through Federal Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP)

**Local Challenges**

- Limited resources—funding and staffing (Most secure programs are getting money from local jurisdictions)
- Maintenance of CERT program and CERT members
- Credibility for CERT as a disaster response asset
- Quality control of CERT training and CERT Train the Trainer training. The difference between a good program and a really great program is the effectiveness of the trainers.
- Access to information on good ideas and best practices. Everybody shares everything, and we need to keep that accessible

**National Challenges**

- Maintenance of CERTs and CERT members.
- More credibility for CERTs as a disaster response asset.
- Quality control of CERT training, and CERT Train the Trainer training.
- Balance of standardization with localization.
- Integration of CERT into national policy.
- Limited resources

**National priorities FY08-09**

- Continue to support rapid expansion of the program at local level.
- Support tailored delivery of CERT training to specific groups.
- Expand tools and other support to help maintain local programs.
- Work to assure inclusion of CERTs in national policy.

**What to watch for in 08-09**

- HSGP Grant Guidance on CERT program.
- Updated basic CERT training and materials.
- Standard CERT train-the-trainer course.
- Job aids for delivering basic training to target groups.

- New supplemental training modules and materials.
- CERT website update.

### **HSGP Grant Guidance**

- Funding for CERT and Citizen Corps through all 4 streams in the grant.
- 15% cap on “promotional” items, 30% on response kits and identification clothing.
- Clarifies:
  - CERT training
    - The online course is not CERT training.
    - Must be instructor-led and classroom based.
    - Must include all the units, not necessarily the time, in the core curriculum
- Eligible equipment purchases
- Training props, (burn pans)
- Equipment uses not allowable
- Eligible training activities
- Basic, Supplemental, Train the Trainer activities
- Other specifics requested by state and local governments

### **Basic CERT Curriculum**

- Update basic course content: The basic skill sets will remain the same!
  - Assure all protocols are current and sufficiently detailed
  - Assure NIMS compliance
- Update course materials:
  - Format Participant Manual (PM) for easier reproduction
  - Create version of PM for use by those with los vision
  - Overhaul PowerPoint files
  - Complete and post four new training videos
  - Search and Rescue – in addition to building search, we will be including external building search.
- Due July 2008

### **CERT Train the Trainer Course**

- Develop standard curriculum and course materials for states and regions conducting Train the Trainer Course.
  - Assure that T-t-T Course trains the trainers
  - Assure that T-t-T Course models effective presentation techniques.
  - Develop prerequisites for T-t-T participants.
  - Knowing how to COACH is an important part of being a good trainer.
- Due August 2008

### **Job Aids for Training Target Groups**

- Develop standard annexes to CERT instructor Guide on how to deliver basic CERT training. The skill sets do not change with these target groups, but the delivery is modified to fit the needs of the target groups.
  - Teen Cert
  - Campus Cert
  - Tribal CERT
  - Workplace CERT
  - All-Abilities CERT
  - Large Venue CERT (due FY 2009)

### **Supplemental Training Modules**

- Develop new training modules to supplement basic CERT training
  - Local programs solicited for training they've developed and would be willing to share ideas, and topics they would like to include among supplemental modules.
  - 3 modules due September 2008.

- 9 additional new modules for national distribution in 24 months.

### **Introduction to CERT Course**

- Revise on-line “Introduction to CERT” (IS 317)
  - Update content as needed.
  - Clarify relationship of on-line course to actual CERT training.
  - Enhance web-based formation.

### **National CERT Website**

- Overhaul and refurbish
  - New CERT program registry.
  - National quarterly newsletter.
  - “CERT in Action” stories on emergency and non-emergency activation of Teams.
  - “CERT News You Can Use”.

### **CERTs and National Policy**

- National Response Framework (NRF)
  - Volunteer and Donations Management Annex. CERTs are owned by the department that has trained them.
  - NIMS Resource-Typing. CERTs will be typed as local resources within the NIMS program. This will increase the credibility of CERTs.

### **THE FIVE MAINTENANCE ISSUES**

1. How people feel about the program – “Am I proud to be CERT trained?”
2. The basic Skill Sets.
3. Team Capabilities: Do we have gathering sites and other protocols for activation, etc.
4. The Administrative update – Do we have a good database that will help track and locate CERTs when we need them. Do we have an equipment inventory list? Can people call a phone number to sign up?
5. Currency in Your Political Environment. When was the last time a graduation was held in your City Council and certificates handed out by the Mayor?

### **NATIONAL CERT WEBSITE**

<http://www.citizencorp.gov/cert>

Independent Study Course (IS317) “Introduction to CERT”

National Office

<http://www.cert@dhs.gov>

### **Jeff Graviat, Utah Department of Homeland Security**

- Challenge of CERT program - How do we provide the leadership and direction for this program when we have everyone so tasked with other assignments?
- View's his responsibility as a listening tool so he can hear concerns and ideas. Wants suggestions and ideas to continue to keep the CERT program robust and viable.
- Would like to see the state working with 29 county emergency managers, and then those county managers take responsibility for working the program in their cities. Would like to be able to fund counties, where counties and cities are working together.

- If we had county CERT programs that are funded properly by state funding, we could do a better job.
- There needs to be some benchmark that shows a viable program. There needs to be a reporting procedure that everyone understands.
- Recognition of volunteers is critical for retention.

### **Best Local Practices**

#### **Morton Sparks, Clearfield City**

Thanks to Mathew Hurtes for his training.

We include Ham radio people in our program.

We recently had an exercise where we had Job Corps people as victims.

We had sound affects, generators running, general confusion.

Since that time we have partnered with Job Corps and are teaching classes there.

We have great support from our City for the CERT program.

We have a radio station we use for announcing emergency preparedness tips, etc.

We have great success with our "Community Council."

I have a CERT truck that was donated by a CERT trainee. It contains cribbing, etc.

An Eagle Scout provided excellent cribbing that was painted, etc.

Our latest project – we are developing an Advance Team and getting it organized. (The A Team) –

This team will be used to help other CERTs who may not be as confident.

#### **Tammy Folkman, Weber County**

CERT Council and Weber Fire District – 11 cities on the council.

When we do an exercise they are all represented.

We have developed a county-wide database.

We have a Reverse 911 Activation System.

We want to organize teams in every city.

We are trying to combine classes, and make sure everyone is teaching from the same manual.

We held an exercise at Weber High School – a half day of training and then an exercise.

Exercise Scheduled in March and April

A local business prints our manuals for free.

We have great support with any preparedness fair.

#### **Eleanor McCowen, Program Director, Sanderson Community Center of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing**

We are due to finish our CERT training in March.

How do we get deaf people involved with CERT?

We recently had an accident where our facility was shut down for 3 days. We worked together to address concerns.

We write to communicate back and forth.

We have interpreters who have made themselves available.

We are coordinating our CERT activities at the Deaf Center.

We are spreading the word that as deaf community, we are here to help.

#### **Jill Stevens, Miss Utah 2007**

Miss Stevens spoke of her experiences serving in Afghanistan with the US Military as a Combat Medic in the Utah National Guard, graduating Summa Cum Laude from the Nursing program at Southern Utah University, as well as unexpected experiences as Miss Utah 2007. Jill's motto in life ~ "Lock and Load!!"

**"Cardstorming" Activity - CERT Opportunities** – facilitated by Mike Stever, Salt Lake City  
Emergency Manager

### **COORDINATION – Janet Lindquist, Group Spokesperson**

- Programs need to be affiliated with their local entity.
- Have a state group to bring solutions
- Start by sharing who is trained . Who is part of the CERT team in your community.
- Have a database on a local level that can be accessed. Use Certificates of Completion and use them to create a database. We tell our people to take their certificates when they move to other communities
- Meet regularly to share information and support. Get to know each other.
- Instructors need to be aware of the counties they are serving and need to guide people to the communities they belong to for training.

### **ACTIVATION - Brad Tillotson, Group Spokesperson**

- The Reverse 911 program (UNUS) – has five ways to notify people – this could be a resource for activation.
- An event can spur interest in getting people to sign up for CERT
- Have a Preparedness Fair where one scenario is to tell people they need to address issue of injured people.
- Use a website to advertise when classes are held.
- Schedule classes so people with various schedules can attend.
- A green helmet or vest can be obtained without certification. Have a wallet card or some card that would be recognized in different states. There is presently no national certification. It is up to the local jurisdiction. When we do NIMS Resource Typing we will provide a tier and a document that will provide that identification.
- If you can come in as a group when you respond, have one person represent the group when talking to the Incident Commander.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

- Advertise the unique class and you may be surprised how many people having special needs may show up.
- Get the list from Meals on Wheels (if you can) to identify folks with special needs.
- License Plates – Category – registered through the city in a special way, so immediate care can be provided, if necessary.

### **RETENTION and TRAINING - Karrie Beardall, Group Spokesperson**

- How do we keep our people involved.
- Run exercises
- Affiliate with the EMS in our City
- Involve them in our exercises
- Electronic Newsletters – monthly
- Shortage and poor quality of trainers
- Trainers unable to attend the classes the state offers
- Have trainers do Job Shadowing in other jurisdictions
- Criticism from another credible instructor would probably be handled well.
- Badging – Some have expiration dates, and some don't. The badging issue needs to be addressed.
- We need to decide how long their badge is good for on a state level.
- Promote the program.
- We don't know who our Utah county emergency manager is.
- We threw out our old manuals, and we make sure we're all using the same manuals.
- The issue of credentialing and certification sometimes is confused. You may have completed the course, but may not have met certification standards. We need to address this issue.
- ID cards for CERT involved background checks, liability, etc. so our jurisdiction backed off.
- Standardizing CERT protocol across the state will strengthen the program, however there are some issues that should be left with the local community. The ID badge may be a matter of local protocol. This needs to be considered.

- Background checks – in some jurisdictions, these checks may only be done on Team Leaders. The national office has no policy on background checks.

#### **VOLUNTEERS - Wade Mathews, Group Spokesperson**

- Getting people involved and keeping them involved.
- Have to have a well-structured and organized program.
- Create the passion and the opportunity to get involved.
- Utilized brochures, churches, schools, (credit for taking CERT classes).
- Use students for mock victims.
- Venture Scouts – great age for Teen CERT.
- CERT Merit Badge – National is working on this.
- Business CERT.
- Utilize CERT trained in non-disaster situations.
- Get more recognition in the community.
- Have students write letters to the editor about their experience.
- Have exercises regularly.
- Team Development – Go out together.
- Utilize Valley Journals

#### **TAKING CHAOS OUT OF CERT - Lance Peterson, Group Spokesperson**

- Teen CERT'S
- Work with school districts
- Kathy's office – take to the state board of education.
- Local businesses – get the involved.
- Use Renee Murphy's – Ready Your Business program.
- Greater political support at the local level.
- Utilize City Councils for graduations.
- Jeff and Kathy take CERT to their political meetings.
- More community PR.
- Invite the media to your exercises.
- More PSA's.
- The Lobbying advocate can help.
- There should not be the question of getting local emergency management involved. CERT is a key tool.
- You can gain the trust of political officials. Invite them to training.
- Use CERT as an anchor to your Citizen Corps.
- CERT Council at the state level (UCAB). Have UCAB be represented regionally and also with schools.
- Have county or city CERT chairs that are on the UCAB.
- Coordinate better with AVERT. They are unaffiliated with local, state, or county. This could be an issue that needs to be addressed.
- Make sure classes are focused on the same skill sets.
- State should embrace CERT as an emergency management program.
- Have an accredited PROGRAM. Emergency Management should be a critical part of this program. Use Emergency Managers.

#### **RESOURCES, LIABILITY, PLANNING – Doug Thompson, Group Spokesperson**

- Common Design Patterns for each of these issues.
- Funding – grants, private and local, commercial funding.
- Donated products.
- Identify the sources.
- There is cross-pollination between the five pillar programs for funding. Take advantage.
- Target the audience – the market.
- Use the verbiage that people understand when you approach these collaborators.

- Is there a national website that provides ideas and solutions to locals ?– yes.
- The education of local officials could be emphasized.

#### **AVERT – Chris Springer**

- AVERT Webmaster
- A lot of people have misunderstanding about AVERT.
- Our purpose is to support the CERT program – not run a CERT program.
- We're not here to teach, if we can help it, but if an entity wants CERT training and the local jurisdiction doesn't provide that training, then we will provide the training they request.
- When a disaster occurs in my community, my AVERT hat comes off, and my CERT helmet goes on.
- We don't want to violate local protocol.
- AVERT uses the training material from the national CERT website.
- One of our instructors has been providing a 2-day course, but at the next board meeting, we will ask him to extend that course.

#### **Janet Lindquist, Utah CERT Advisory Board Chairperson**

##### **Revamping Proposal**

- UCAB Executive Board made up of 7 Regional Representatives (reflecting the 7 State regions) and representing all 29 counties, plus the UCAB officers. Problem in the past - way too many people on the board, not enough diverse representation.
  - Regional representatives:
    - Selected by the members of their own region.
    - Must be willing to drive – may use others to help (reimbursement from State?)
    - Meet regularly with other RR's.
    - Will support promote activities through refreshers and presentations in their own area.
- UCAB General Membership
  - CERT program managers
- UCAB Mission
  - I would like to see every CERT program have life and depth to its program.
  - Every team should be meeting regularly and have a life of its own. Not just going through the course and then putting away their equipment. Have refreshers and state conferences where we share successes and ideas.
  - Janet emphasized that she wants to bring CERT back to the grass roots. She noted that meetings will be held at various locations throughout the state.
- UCAB Goal –
  - CERT program in every community
- CERT Trainers and Train the Trainers
- Additional Training
  - CERT Conferences
  - Advance Mock and Training Refreshers
  - Continuing Education
  - How to form a paper trail
  - Approaching your county for money
- CERT in Action
  - Rural
  - Suburban
  - Urban

- The Organization Commander Manual
- UCAB Objective –
  - Provide information, guidance, support to CERT programs throughout the state.

The next UCAB meeting is on March 15<sup>th</sup> at the Sandy City Hall multipurpose room. Please determine who you would like to have your Regional Representative be and have them attend the meeting.

Janet Lindquist's email address: [Certified@frontiernet.net](mailto:Certified@frontiernet.net)

**Larry Ellertson, Utah Citizen Corps Council Chairperson**

This year, the grant money is remaining at the state level to be used to benefit all CERTs throughout the state. Mini-grants have been made locally to qualifying jurisdictions.

**Rachel Jacky, Concluding Remarks:**

- The new Train the Trainer course will not be conducting the CERT course.
- It will come with pre-requisites.
- A pre-requisite of having a signed document.

One of the new features of the new national CERT website will be CERTs in Action. This is a time for us to toot our own horn with activities that have happened in our area. Take advantage of the opportunity to brag about our program, so she can brag about us on the hill. We have to give her the goods to do that. The funding issue is a national issue, not just state or local.

Talk about money and resources freely. Ask. Talk with our congressional delegation about how fantastic CERT is.

The discussion about UCAB and the lively discussion we had today is only one indicator of how far ahead of the pack Utah is when it comes to the CERT program.